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able to raise his readers toward the plane of his own intellectual view — and he will do it to a certain extent — he has performed a valuable service, even if he has not made a contribution to historical knowledge.

C. W. A.

*Literary culture in early New England. 1620 to 1730.* By Thomas Goddard Wright. (New Haven: Yale university press, 1920. 326 p. \$6.00)

This study lies chiefly in the domain of history; only incidentally does it fall within the field of literary criticism. Its purpose is not primarily to weigh and assess colonial New England literature. It is rather to describe the culture of the people in one cultural area, with Boston as the center, through one century and to see how that culture was mirrored in the literature they produced. Chronologically the period is divided into three parts, one of fifty years following the settlement of Plymouth, the others of about thirty years each. The division is more or less arbitrary, yet it may be said that each period has distinct markings of its own. Within each period the author discusses education, libraries both public and private, the desire and ability to obtain books, the number and character of books and pamphlets bought or published, the circulation and appreciation of books, and the literary and cultural relations between the two Englands, Old and New.

Dr. Wright's book is an expression of a fine type of scholarship. There is every evidence of fullness, fairness, and detachment of treatment in it. The author has examined a multitude of very scattered sources. There are many and explicit citations to sustain his points. Scattered through the text are many well-chosen quotations from the sources to illustrate the use of and familiarity with books, as also long lists to show the number, variety, and character of books that the colonial fathers possessed. An appendix of seventy-five pages gives abundant illustrations of the extent to which books circulated, invoices showing what books came from England to the booksellers of New England, the multitudinous references to books in Increase Mather's writings, and lists of books in the libraries of Harvard and of William Brewster. There is a very good bibliography.

The narrative is simple and clear. It is a work which will make its chief appeal to the student of the period whether in history or in literature. It is a work not to be ignored by either. And on the other hand, it is a book which has an interest for the intelligent lay reader.

Two points in the work impress one forcibly. One is the high cultural standard and the persistent intellectual eagerness of the colonial New England leaders. The other is the close cultural and literary relations between Old and New England. In the latter respect the volume is in

line with other recent works which have done much to destroy the insularity usually ascribed by older writers to the colonial era. In bringing out the relationships between the two Englands the study shows the greatest originality. Altogether it ranks high as an attempt to cover the cultural history of colonial New England.

W. T. Root

*Freedom of speech.* By Zechariah Chaffee, Jr. Professor of law in Harvard university. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920. 431 p. \$3.50)

This book well deserves a note in a magazine devoted to the history of the middle west. It is indeed a very distinct contribution to the history of the theory and application in a democracy of freedom of speech. In no part of the country was the test more severe than in the middle west during the world war. It is a chastening experience for those who take a just pride in the war record of this section to look on the darker side that is presented when one turns the pages of this scholarly lawyer's account of war legislation and its enforcement. Many explanations and justifications may be offered by a historian who has seen how easily war hysteria submerges all judgment in a matter the metes and bounds of which are so debatable as free speech. But no thoughtful citizen who knows that the value he sets on one of the most precious things guarded by the first amendment is measured by his willingness to defend it for others can be quite easy in his mind about the safety of free speech after he reads this book. The record of the courts was reasonably good; that of the federal attorney-general's office under Mr. Gregory and his special assistant, Mr. O'Brian, was excellent in view of all the circumstances. Unfortunately it was not until 1919 that any cases were passed upon by the supreme court under the first amendment. In the meantime the courts of first instance had gone unguided and unchecked. It must be added with regret that even Justice Holmes in delivering the opinions limited his expressions so that there is even now no full and rounded and authoritative judicial interpretation of the first amendment.

Most of the federal activity in war times was under the espionage act of June, 1917, and the old internment statute of 1798. The power this gave the postmaster-general to exercise a practically unreviewable authority in excluding material from the mails was its most unfortunate feature. The sedition act of May, 1918, was copied from a loosely drawn Montana statute and opened the door for indiscriminate actions. When one adds to this the abnormal strain on the federal courts and legal officers, all the legislation by the states, the hysteria that led weak governors, zealous defense councils, excited and suspicious communities, and amateur detectives to indefensible harshness, the wonder is that the record is not darker.